

tute for Religious and Social Studies of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York.

The volume has the obvious strength and the obvious weakness of a symposium. The strength is a certain community of outlook achieved by individuals and groups with a wide diversity of background, experience, training, and belief. The weakness is an equally impressive lack of unity and force. The contributions are uneven in quality and are not all directed to the same point or even to the same sort of point. But this is the strength and this is the weakness of the American spirit of which they speak and of the democracy and Protestantism that have shaped and informed it.

Among the lectures which stood out in the mind of this reader, there were "The Dissenting Tradition," by John T. McNeill; "The Enlightenment Tradition," by Ralph Henry Gabriel; "The Ideal of Religious Liberty—a Jewish View," by Louis Finkelstein; and "The Spirit of American Philosophy," by John Herman Randall, Jr. There may or may not be some significance in the fact that one of the two lectures not available for publication was "The Ideal of Religious Liberty—a Catholic View."—PRESTON ROBERTS.

JONES, MARC EDMUND. *George Sylvester Morris: His Philosophical Career and Theistic Idealism*. Philadelphia: David McKay Co., 1948. xvi+430 pages. \$3.75.

One-time teacher of John Dewey, translator of Ueberweg's *History of Philosophy*, and author of various works no longer read, Morris was the subject in 1917 of a biography by a successor at Michigan, R. M. Wenley. With Wenley's interpretation, Jones here carries on a running controversy; and if anyone has any interest in Morris—as presumably some would have on account of his relation to Dewey—that person, by all means, should read this book. But that anyone else should, except a reviewer, the reading of the book quite fails to convince me. In me, certainly, little impression other than boredom is produced by the numerous long quotations that weight the pages; and the author's own contribution does not provide enough recompense.—ARTHUR CHILD.

KUHN, HELMUT. *Encounter with Nothingness*. Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1949. xxii+168 pages. \$3.00.

Christianity at its greatest is always a tragic view of life. The world is nought, and dying unto it is the alpha and omega of wisdom. Such freedom as we have as individuals is awful and dangerous. Thy will, not mine, be done. And nothing within our power can achieve for us the ultimate salvation from our earthly predicament. Salvation comes, if it comes at all, as an uncaused Act of Grace. Thus runs the Christian theme *de rerum natura*.

Our author, like Jacques Maritain before him,

points to the fact that existentialism (not only Kierkegaard's but also that of the less religious, twentieth-century variety) sounds a similar note. It dramatizes and drives home the inexorable fact of *Unheimlichkeit* in this world. Estrangement, of man from man and from nature, is the essence of natural experience. So, anguish and existence are of a piece. "Der Pilger ist daheim nur wenn das Grab ihn deckt." Man, in his loneliness and need, reaches desperately for companionable things in his environment—and finds that fundamentally they are nothing. This is the dreadful "encounter with nothingness."

Professor Kuhn is sympathetic with the main insights of existentialism, which he wisely treats as a spirit or mood inspiring religion, literature, and philosophy of all ages. This little book is a good introduction to the universal mood. But he does focus on Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and Sartre, agreeing with them as against rationalists that man is *animal passionale*, but complaining at their tendency to conceive as futile (*une passion inutile*) even his profoundest emotional experience. The author believes that they overlook the fact of a *saving* passion, something that can lift man above the welter of nothings. And this is the necessary corrective that Christianity has for existentialism. It provides man with an eternal *summum amabile*, and the love of God sustains him in his encounter with the nothingness and transience of the standards of this world.—VIRGIL C. ALDRICH.

MAKRAKIS, APOSTOLOS. *Interpretation of the Book of Revelation*. Chicago: Hellenic Christian Educational Society, 1948. 552 pages. \$5.00.

The author of this exposition of the Book of Revelation was a much persecuted philosopher and biblical student of the last century in Athens. Originally written in 1881, the book has been recently translated into English, apparently for the benefit of Greek Orthodox Americans.

Revelation is regarded as "the most perfect book God has granted unto man." Written by the apostle John in A.D. 95, it was intended both to strengthen the suffering church of Domitian's time and to predict the course of history until the end of the world for the benefit of modern readers. The first beast of chapter 13 is identified as Mohammed and the second beast as the papacy. The end of the world will come in 1896 (the author later—when the date was falsified by the course of events—moved it up to 1942).

The book is throughout an apology for Greek Orthodoxy. Vitriolic attacks on the Roman Catholic church abound everywhere. However, the author does not whitewash the corruptions of his own church. He often bitterly attacks degenerate priests of his communion by name. It is evident that he is a devoutly religious man, eager to exalt the "true" church and to purge its priesthood of defilement. In